

For Immediate Release

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March is Problem Gambling Awareness Month

#HaveTheConversation about problem gambling to raise awareness for this often-hidden disease

TOPEKA, Kan. - The Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services in collaboration with the National Council on Problem Gambling is dedicating the month of March to helping people “Have the Conversation” about problem gambling. Approximately two million (one percent) of U.S. adults are estimated to meet the criteria for pathological gambling, another four to six million (two to three percent) would be considered problem gamblers. Yet gambling remains a hidden addiction for many.

Problem Gambling Awareness Month is designed to help raise awareness of the prevention, treatment and recovery services available for those adversely affected by gambling. The grassroots campaign brings together a wide range of stakeholders – public health organizations, advocacy groups and gambling operators – who work collaboratively to let people know that hope and help exist.

Across Kansas, groups including four state-funded regional task forces and a statewide coalition hold events, mount media campaigns, promote Gambling Disorder Screening Day on March 13 and conduct outreach to people who can make a difference ensuring that problem gambling services are promoted and the public is educated regarding problem gambling.

As March Madness reaches a crescendo with an estimated \$10 billion in bets placed on NCAA basketball championship games, calls to the National Problem Gambling Helpline spike an average of 30 percent.

To get help for a gambling problem for you or a loved one, Kansas residents can call the Kansas problem gambling helpline at 1-800-522-4700 or can visit ksgamblinghelp.com for more information. The call is free and confidential. No out-of-pocket cost treatment is available for problem gamblers and concerned others with revenues collected from state owned casinos. The program is administered by the Kansas Department for Aging and Disability Services.